

**WHY CAN I TRUST THE BIBLE?**  
**40 Days In The Word – Part 1A**  
**Rick Warren**

**Student Outline: Excerpts from Rick Warren, Saddleback Christian Church**  
**INTRODUCTION**

1. The Bible is the most read book in history. It's the bestselling book in history. And it is the most translated book in history. Why is it the Word of God? How do we know it is the Word of God?

2. 2 Timothy 3, the Bible says this, "*All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching and rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*"

a. "*All Scripture is God-breathed.*" Circle that word "God-breathed." That word in Greek is theopneustos. Theo, meaning God, pneustos, meaning breathed. The Bible is God-breathed.

b. What does that mean? Some of the translations translate the Scripture as **inspired**. But we're not talking about an inspiring writer writing an inspiring book. We're talking about God inspired this book. It is God breathed.

c. Each Sunday you listen to Your Pastor. You're listening to his breath. Because what his voice is breath coming up over his vocal cords, vibrating those vocal cords and coming out as sound. If your Pastor didn't have any breath, he wouldn't have any voice. So the breath of your Pastor is the word of Your Pastor. It is the voice of your Pastor.

d. And the Bible says that God's Word is God's very breath. It's not just a good idea. It is God's Word to us. As a result of that, Psalm 119 tells us this "*All of your commands can be trusted.*" Everything in the Bible can be trusted as true because it comes from God.

e. It's one thing for the Bible to claim that it's the Word of God. It's one thing for the Bible to say it can be trusted. But how do I know really? How do I know this is the Word of God? It's not just a bunch of fables, a bunch of stories that are put together.

f. That's a valid, legitimate, important question that we need to ask before we ever start studying the Bible. How do I know I can trust it?

3. *Time* magazine thought this was such an important question it put it on its cover twice. Here was the cover of *Time* magazine that said, How true is the Bible? It's a good question. And another cover of *Time* magazine: Is the Bible fact or fiction?

4. We can be confident that we have an answer to those questions by *Time Magazine*. Because there are incredible proofs, evidences and facts that you need to know to help you make up your mind. So you're not making up your mind based on what you've heard other people say, but

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what the Bible actually claims for itself and what history, science and all these other things teach us about the Bible.

## HOW DO I KNOW I CAN TRUST THE BIBLE?

There are seven reasons.

### 1.It is historically accurate.

a.The Bible is historically accurate. For that reason, I know I can trust the Bible. In other words, the Bible isn't just doctrinally correct. It's not just theologically correct. It's not just accurate regarding morals and regarding ethics. It's true history. Real people, real places, real time. It is true historically.

b.Why is that even important? Because the Bible tells us this: God cannot lie. A lot of people ask this, is there anything God can't do? Yeah, there are a lot of things God can't do. God cannot deny himself. God cannot not be God. God cannot lie because God is truth.

c.In fact the Bible says this in Hebrews 6:18 *"It is impossible for God to lie because God is truth."* The only reason the universe works is because God is a God of truth which means stuff is true all the time.

d.Can you imagine for instance if the law of gravity only worked on Tuesday and Thursday? It'd be pretty weird. But the laws of physics are true. God thought them up. He created them. The laws of mathematics are true. God created the laws of mathematics on which the universe runs. So God cannot lie.

e. **If this book has one lie in it, it's not a godly book.** It's not a book of God. Because God cannot lie. Psalm 33:4 says this *"The Word of the Lord is right and true."* That's not only true and right about salvation. It's true and right about history.

f.So how do we know that the Bible is historically accurate? By the same way you know that any other history is accurate. You just go by the test of good history.

1.For instance, one of the ways you test good history is, is it from **eyewitness accounts?** An historian would say is this written down by somebody who saw it or is it second hand or third hand, or is it a legend written down a hundred years later?

2.The Bible is primarily eyewitness accounts. That's why it's good history. Moses was there when the Red Sea split. Joshua was there when the walls of Jericho fell. The disciples of Jesus sat in the upper room and saw the resurrected Jesus appear and then they wrote down what happened and we read about it. Matthew was there, he wrote it down. John was there and he wrote it down. Peter was there and he told a guy by the name of Mark, and he wrote it down in the gospel of Mark. And Luke talked to all of them, including Jesus' mother and heard about what had happened. So it's eyewitness accounts of what had happened.

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g. The other test of history by which we know the Bible is accurate is the extreme care with which the **Bible was copied**. You may have heard people say, “I’m sure it was right when it was first written. But it’s been passed down generation after generation. All these changes have come in...” Ever heard that? If you’ve heard that you know somebody just hasn’t taken the time to study it, to look into it. When you look into it you find out the extreme care with which the Bible was copied.

The Old Testament copyists, the scribes, when they would copy these scrolls from one to the other, they would copy like a Xerox copy. It had to be exact. They had this long list of rules they had to go by to make sure it was exact.

1. Rules like, when they had a scroll, they had a specified number of columns throughout it so it would always be the same. And the length of those columns always had to be from forty-eight to sixty in length and it always had to be exactly thirty letters wide so they could always check it out.

2. To make sure that it was always right, they had this rule that you had to copy letter by letter and not word by word. You know on your phone, when it does text prediction and it sends the wrong word to somebody that you didn’t want to send? They wanted to make sure that didn’t happen, so they could only copy letter by letter. And they went by these tests to make sure it was right after they copied it. They knew in a book how many letters of the alphabet were in each book. So for instance our letter “a”, they would know that there were 1,653 “a”s in this book. And if it had 1,654 when they counted it, they threw the scroll away and started over.

3. They were so exact, they knew the middle letter of the first five books of the Bible, the Pentateuch. They knew the middle letter of the whole Old Testament. And after they copied all of this, they would go to that middle letter and count forward and backward; and if it didn’t come out exactly the number it should, they would throw it away and they’d start over. That’s how exact they were.

4. There are a lot of ways we can see how they were exact. But one of the ways we can see that they were exact is through something called the Dead Sea Scrolls. We’ve all heard of those. What’s so significant about the **Dead Sea Scrolls**?

a. The Dead Sea Scrolls were written about a hundred years before Jesus. They have in them copies of all of the Old Testament books except Esther – all the other Old Testament books. When they found those scrolls, the earliest copies we had before that were from nine hundred years after Jesus, many of those books. So there’s this thousand years gap. All of a sudden we get to check out how much change came in in those thousand years.

b. You wonder how much? About five percent. That was almost all just the spelling of words and the spelling of the names. Over a thousand years, those

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copyists were proved to be right as they copied again and again and again and made it right. That's another proof of the historical accuracy of the Bible.

5. Another proof is in **archeology**. You look at archeology and it proves again and again that the places and the people, all that the Bible talks about are true. It's not fiction. You can go find these places. We've dug up these places. The Areopagus where Paul was, the theater in Athens where there was this riot... We've dug them up. We can see them today. The Pool of Siloam where the blind man was healed, portions of Herod's Temple, all these places that are talked about in the Bible, they've dug them up. We can see them.

a. The book of Acts is all about historical accuracy. Luke, an historian as well as a doctor, he wrote the book of Acts. He talks about fifty-four cities, thirty-nine countries, and nine different islands – complete historical accuracy.

b. One of the great things about how archeology works with the Bible is how it's again and again shown that actually the Bible is more accurate than our ideas of history. There have been many times when we've had an idea of what is historical and said the Bible must be wrong. And the Bible has proved itself to be right.

c. For instance, for a long time historians said, we're not sure that guy named Solomon lived in the Old Testament and we're certainly sure he didn't have horses like it talked about. They only had camels back then. So that can't be right. Until at Megiddo, they discovered one of Solomon's chariot cities with thousands of stables for horses! So the Bible was proved right.

d. One of the greatest examples of that is an empire called the **Hittites**. There's this whole empire called the Hittites talked about in the Bible that was not talked about anywhere else. So for centuries historians said the Bible just made it up. Until the early 1900s a professor by the name of Hugo Winkler discovered at Bogazkoy ten thousand clay tablets at the capital of the Hittites. Now everyone believes in the Hittites. Go on Wikipedia and read about the Hittites.

Not only is the Bible historically accurate, every time archeology backs it up. But it is scientifically accurate. That's the second reason.

### 2. The Bible is scientifically accurate.

a. There is so much misunderstanding and baloney about this in the world; because people who think the Bible is scientifically inaccurate means, a, they've never studied the Bible and, b, they probably don't know science. Because the truth is God always sets up the laws of science and he made sure that his Word does not contradict the laws of science.

b. The Bible was not given to be a scientific textbook, obviously. You don't study the Bible to build a rocket. And the Bible doesn't use scientific language.

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c. But the Bible never, never, never gives bad science. Not once in over sixteen hundred years in which this book was written, does it give bad science. In fact it is always ahead of science. There are things in the Bible, the Bible says were true, that we've just discovered a hundred years ago, two hundred years ago, three hundred years ago.

d. Johannes Kepler, the famous mathematician, the famous astronomer said, "Science is simply thinking God's thoughts after him." In other words, God established the laws of physics and then we discover them. God established the laws of biology and we discover them. God established the laws of mathematics and we discover them. One of the reasons why we know the Bible can be trusted is because it's scientifically accurate. And the reason it's accurate is because the laws of the universe were invented by God. So he obviously understands them even in years past when we didn't. Because for thousands of years we've misunderstood different things.

e. **One thing about truth is it never changes.** But one thing about science is it constantly changes. There's nothing more worthless than an obsolete science book. I guarantee you that the science book you had in the third grade is not being used in the third grade today. A lot of things in that book are no longer believed or even taught. Nothing is more worthless than a five-year-old computer book. You can find them in any garage sale and nobody wants them, because things get out of date so fast. Science things that we thought we believed, we now know more about it. In fact in medical science it happens all the time.

1. How many articles have you read that now say that something you thought was good for you now causes you cancer? Or stuff that they said is fine for a pregnant woman to take and then ten years later they go it's not fine.

f. **Science constantly changes.** If you've ever been to Paris, you've probably gone to the Louvre, the famous art museum and library, world class library. In the Louvre library there's one section that has three and a half miles of obsolete science books. Three and a half miles! Because stuff they thought was scientifically fact fifteen hundred years ago was disproven a thousand years ago. What we thought a thousand years ago was disproven seven hundred fifty years ago. And what we've thought for twenty-five years is disproven ten years ago. And what we thought ten years ago is now changed to today. If you had been reading the Bible a thousand years ago or seven hundred years ago or five hundred years ago, what the Bible says would not have matched the science of that day because it wasn't up to date.

g. **God understands stuff even when we don't and his rules don't change.** The Bible says this in Psalm 148 "*Let every created thing [that is the whole universe] give praise to the Lord, for he issued his command, [God set these rules in motion, the laws of thermodynamics, the laws of physics] and they came into being. He established them forever and ever. And his orders will never be revoked.*"

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h. The second law of thermodynamics doesn't work today and not work tomorrow. It always works because it was true and it was made by God. Truth doesn't change.

i. In 1861 there was a very famous book that came out called Fifty-one Incontrovertible Proofs that the Bible is Scientifically Inaccurate. It's a very famous book. Fifty-one incontrovertible scientific facts that we know, this is in 1861, that the Bible does not agree with and we know that the Bible is scientifically inaccurate. The only problem is today, a hundred fifty year later, you can't find a single scientist on the planet who would agree with any one of those incontrovertible facts. They have all been disproven by science.

Truth does not change.

j. One of the proofs that we know that this book is not simply manmade, that this book came from God, that God directed men and women to talk and speak and write things down, and we know it's the Word of God is what's *not* in it. What's not in it? Because if this were a human book, you would expect it to be filled with scientific facts of the prevailing day. But they're not here. They're not in the book.

1. For instance, for thousands and thousands of years, people believed that the earth was flat. It wasn't until Copernicus and Galileo and Columbus that people realized the world's not flat, it's round. It's a sphere. It's a ball. So you would expect the Bible to say the earth is flat because it was in existence and being written during those thousands of years when everybody thought the earth was flat.

2. Not a single verse in the Bible says the earth is flat. Not at all. In fact it says the exact opposite. Two thousand six hundred years ago, God said this in the book of Isaiah 40:22 "*God is enthroned above the sphere on the earth.*" Two thousand six hundred years ago the Bible says the earth is round, the earth is a sphere, the earth is a globe. Long before anybody knew it. When that was written nobody believed it. But God said it and it was true, whether anybody believed it or not.

k. For thousands of years, people believed that **the earth had to be held up by something**. Depending on the culture you were in, you got certain different beliefs on what held it up.

1. For instance if you were Greek, in Greek culture you believed that the world was held up by a giant name Atlas. And we all know who Atlas is. Atlas held up the world. Part of the Bible is written in Greek. Atlas isn't in the Bible. Why? Because it's not true. So it's not in the Bible. You would expect that during that time it would have somehow found its way into the Bible but it's not there.

2. For thousands of years, the Hindus believed that the earth sat on the back of giant elephants. And that when the elephants moved, that's what caused earthquakes. What did the elephants stand on? I'm not making this up. You can find this in any encyclopedia. They believed that the giant elephants stood on the back of a giant sea turtle. And the giant sea turtle

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stood on the back of a giant sea serpent who swam through a cosmic sea. That was the prevailing attitude in the world for hundreds if not thousands of years. It's not in the Bible, even though the Bible was being written during this time. Why? Because the Bible leaves out the lies.

3.The Bible tells us that Moses was skilled and schooled in all of the wisdom of the ancient Egyptians. Because Moses was adopted as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. So he went to the best schools in ancient Egypt and was taught what was the prevailing science of that day.

4.The Egyptians were flat out brilliant. They built the pyramids; they were masters at architecture, at engineering, at astronomy. But the ancient Egyptians were dead wrong on what held up the earth. Because ancient Egypt believed that the earth was held up by five pillars. Certainly Moses was schooled in that science because he went to the best schools of the land as Pharaoh's grandson. **Yet not once in Scripture do you find that the earth is held up by five pillars.** Why? Because it's not true. So it didn't make it into the Bible. The prevailing science of the day didn't make it there.

5.In fact, the oldest known writing to man is likely the book of Job. It's the oldest literature in existence today that we know about. Job was the first book written in the Bible. The books of the Bible are not in chronological order. Job is the oldest book. In Job 26:7 the oldest known literature in the human race says this *"God stretches the sky over empty space and hangs the earth on nothing."* Who told Job? How did he know that? Everybody knows the earth is flat and it's on the back of pillars. Why? Because the Bible only, always tells the truth.

1. It is sheer nonsense to say that the Bible is scientifically inaccurate. That means you just don't know the Bible. For instance, for years it was the accepted science that there were about a thousand **stars in the universe**. And that they could be counted. That the number of stars were finite. In fact a hundred fifty years B.C. a man named Hipparchus counted them and he wrote a very famous dissertation saying that there were one thousand twenty-two stars in the universe. That's it. It was accepted for a long, long time there were only a thousand twenty-two stars in the universe.

a.But it doesn't say that in the Bible. Three hundred years later, a hundred fifty years AD, a guy named Ptolemy does it again. And he comes out and says that guy Hipparchus is a nut. There are a thousand twenty-six. He found four more stars.

b. Scientist are constantly finding planets. You've had scientist who have come recently and said the number of stars in the universe is infinite. It is widely accepted today that there are more stars in the universe than there are grains of sand on the planet earth. They cannot be counted.

c.We didn't know that. Everybody accepted there were a thousand twenty-six stars. But two thousand six hundred years ago in the Bible God had said this in Jeremiah 33:22, *"The number of stars are infinite."*

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d.I guess Ptolemy didn't read that one. Or anybody else for thousands of years. But it was there. Because it is the truth. It is always the truth.

e.We can go into so many different areas. Into biology and see what the Bible says about biology. Into chemistry and see what the Bible says about chemistry. Into medicine...

n.For many years people believed that too much **blood in your body made you sick**. For thousands of years this was the accepted custom and they did what was called bloodletting. Doctors would cut a sick person and bleed them thinking that was going to make them healthy. That was accepted science. Everybody knew that was true. It wasn't, but everybody knew that was true science. It was because of Hypocrites; and for 2000 years since Hypocrites they believed that all illness came from four bodily fluids – yellow bile, black bile, red blood or blue phlegm. Those four fluids also controlled your temperament.

1.Nobody believes that anymore. But for two thousand years that was scientific proof. So people thought you had to bleed people to get the bad stuff out. Many people don't know that our first president George Washington was killed by doctors bleeding him to death. That's how he died. George Washington had a heart problem. Doctors didn't know what to do so they did the common science of the day and they bled George Washington. He didn't get well so a few days later they bled him again, cut and bled him. He didn't get well so a few days later they bled him a third time and he died from blood loss.

2.Today we know you *give* people blood when they're sick. We do the exact opposite of what they did for thousands of years. You give people blood because we know the life source is in the blood. And good blood makes people feel better. That that's where the life comes from. It's called a transfusion. We *give* people blood today. But they didn't know that for thousands of years.

3.But the Bible knew it. In fact back in Leviticus 17, thousands and thousands of years ago, Leviticus 17:11, God said this "*The life of every creature is in its blood.*"

4.How did Moses know that? We didn't even know that blood circulates until around 1650. It wasn't until the seventeenth century when William Harvey discovered that blood circulates. For thousands of years nobody even thought it circulated. Everybody bought into Galen who was a Greek doctor. For two thousand years they accepted his idea basically that the heart was the source of heat. But nobody knew it actually pumped blood. Yet thousands of years ago the Bible says, "*The life of every creature is in its blood.*" They should have just read the Bible!

5.During the Middle Ages there was the bubonic plague. The bubonic plague killed one fourth of Europe. One out of every four people died during the black plague. Because we didn't understand germs. We didn't understand contagion. And we didn't understand infection. And we didn't understand quarantining people. So they had sick people with the



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bubonic plague who were contagious sleeping right next to healthy people; and people just kept dying because we didn't know about germs and contagion. So it became an epidemic and then a pandemic. They should have read the Bible.

6. Because thousands and thousands of years before the bubonic plague God had said in Leviticus 13:4 *"Put an infected person in quarantine for seven days."* That's thousands of years before we even knew what germs were. God was saying here's how you take care of people who get infected with an illness. You put them outside the camp for seven days. If they're still sick, he says in the next verse, keep them out there for another seven days. Nobody understood quarantine because nobody understood germs. But God was right.

o. We can go on and on. The Bible is always scientifically accurate. It is always ahead of science. The Bible says this in Proverbs 30:5 *"Every word of God is flawless."* Mine aren't, yours aren't, human beings' aren't. But every word of God is flawless. It's not only flawless, Psalm 12:6 says *"The words of the Lord are flawless, like silver refined in a furnace of clay and purified seven times!"*

Often our mouth gets in gear before our mind gets engaged and we say words that are flawed. But God's Word is flawless.

We know we can trust the Bible because it is historically accurate, archeology confirms it. And it is scientifically accurate.